

Hanson, MA Area D  
Plymouth County Hospital  
Area Data Sheet

<u>MHC</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Street</u>	<u>Style/Form</u>	<u>Date</u>
103	Bonney House	255	High Street	Federal Cape Cod house	before 1830
104	Plymouth County Hospital		High Street	Italian Renaissance	1919/1921
105	Nurses Residence		High Street	Italian Renaissance	1921?
106	Nurses Residence		High Street	Italian Renaissance	1939
107	Superintendent's House		High Street	Italian Renaissance	1921?
108	Maintenance/Grounds Building		High Street	Italian Renaissance	1919
109	Paint Shop		High Street	Italian Renaissance	1919
110	Visiting Nurses' Office		High Street	Bungalow	unknown

Massachusetts Historical Commission  
Massachusetts Archives Building  
220 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Town **Hanson**

Place

Name of Area **Plymouth County  
Hospital**

Present Use **County Offices & vacant**

Construction Dates/Period  
**before 1830; 1919/1921/1939**

Overall Condition  
**excellent to fair**

Major Instructions and Alterations  
**none**

Acreage **approximately 60 acres**

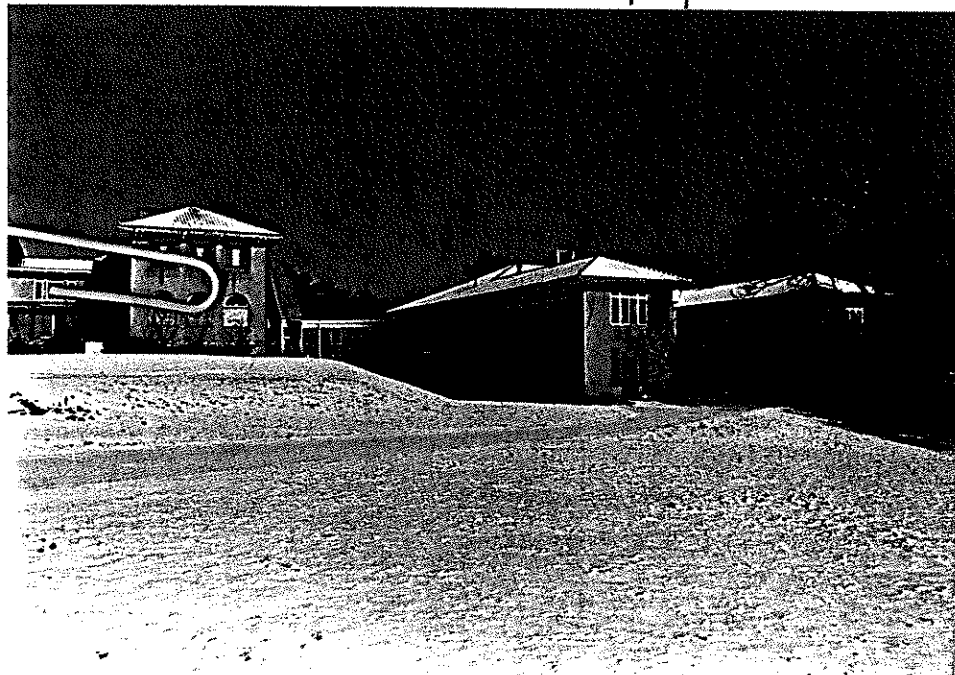
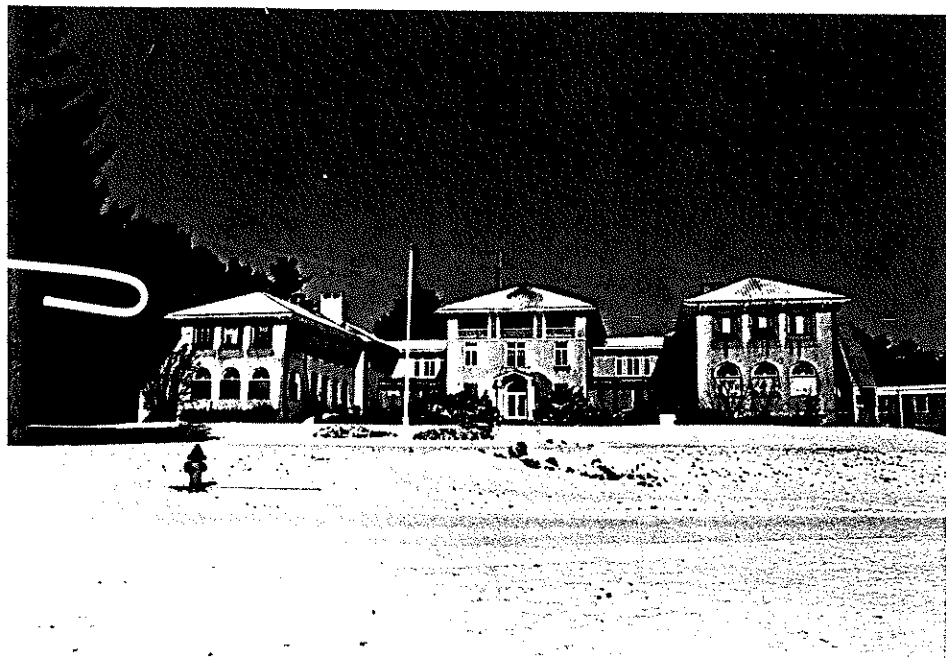
Recorded by **Dempsey/Driemeyer**

Organization **Hanson Historical  
Commission**

Date **April 1996**

Sketch Map

*see continuation sheet*



INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

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Community  
Hanson

Property Address  
High Street

Form # 103-110

Area Plymouth County Hospital, D



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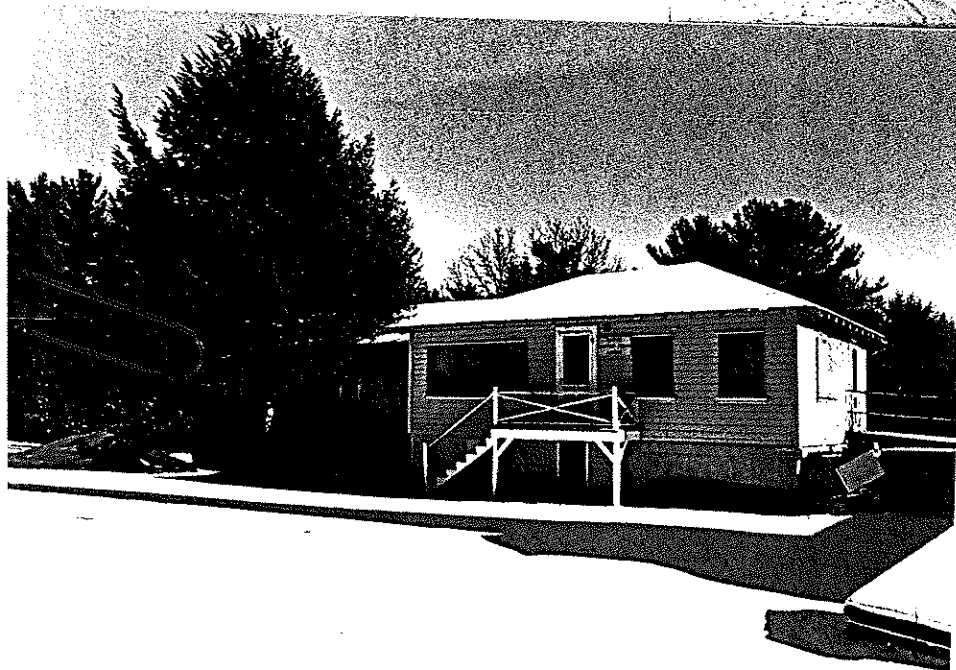
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**ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION** see continuation sheet

The Plymouth County Hospital area is a group of mostly two- and three-story, hip-roofed buildings in the Italian Renaissance style located on a nearly sixty acre parcel. The property also includes the Bonney House, an expanded Cape Cod house; a county water tower and a cluster of late nineteenth century residences that predate the hospital's construction (see High Street Bonney Hill area, Area C). Located on Bonney Hill, the highest elevation within a ten mile radius, the area consists of two building clusters. One group includes the administrative and hospital wards. The other group includes residences for the nurses, doctors and administrator; and maintenance outbuildings.

**HISTORICAL NARRATIVE** see continuation sheet

The Plymouth County Hospital is one of several county tuberculosis hospitals constructed in the second decade of the twentieth century in Massachusetts. The passage of Chapter 286 in the Acts of 1916 authorized county commissioners to raise and expend money to acquire land and to construct and equip hospitals or to purchase and alter existing structures. The presence of county treatment facilities would allow patients to remain closer to their homes during the prolonged treatment. Plans for the Plymouth County Hospital began almost immediately after the Act's passage but the First World War delayed completion of the facilities. The site was selected for two reasons: as a nearly central point in the county and as the second highest elevation in the county. This later feature was considered beneficial for TB patients.

Dedicated 19 May, 1919, the first patient was admitted two weeks later. At the time tuberculosis treatment required an extended stay in the hospital of up to three years. Treatment included lots of out-door activities. A 1928 descriptive circular published by the hospital shows children playing in the snow among other things. The hospital facilities were open to all tuberculosis patients in Plymouth County though frequently there was a several month waiting list.

**REFERENCES**

- Smith, Plan of Hanson, 1830
- Walling, Map of Hanson, 1856
- Walker, Atlas of Plymouth County, 1879
- Richards, Atlas of Plymouth County, 1903
- Plymouth County Hospital
- Boston Public Library Architect Index File
- History of the Town of Hanson, typescript, c. 1960
- Department of Public Safety, Plans, Massachusetts State Archives

✓ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. See NR Criteria Statement form.

## INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

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Area Plymouth County Hospital, D

**Historical Narrative, continued.**

The original hospital/administrative building and maintenance buildings were designed by the Boston architect J. Williams Beal (1855-1919) who designed numerous state and county buildings, large business blocks, and large-scale elite housing in various upper-middle class residential neighborhoods in the eastern part of the state. The Plymouth County Hospital was one of Beal's last commissions. Blueprints show the hospital structure was designed to have 10 bed wards in each of the wings on both stories. A reception area, superintendent's office, clerk's office and examination room were to be located in the center pavilion on the first floor with space for the matron and head nurse on the second floor. Solariums were located on the southern end of each wing at the second story and on the center pavilion at the third story. The dining rooms, food preparation facilities and officer's room were located on the first floor of the rear ell. Nurses' chambers and male attendants' rooms were located on the second story of the ell. Beal's successor firm, J. Williams Beal and Sons, designed the hospital addition located to the east of the original structure two years later. This U-shaped structure had a 16 bed men's ward, boys' and girls' wards, and recreation rooms on the first floor; and men's and women's wards and dining room facilities on the second floor. Beal's firm probably also designed the nurses/office building on High Street at this time. In 1939 Ralph P. Jackson, a Brockton architect, designed the nurses' housing addition. Additional research is necessary to clarify the designer of the superintendent's residence and the early history of the head nurse's residence.

The hospital had comparatively few superintendents during its more than sixty years of operation. The first was Dr. Bradford H. Pierce (?-1958) who remained at the hospital for nearly thirty years after its opening. A native of Wakefield, Pierce came to Hanson in 1919 from Cambridge to be the first superintendent and medical director of the hospital. Trained at Harvard Medical School (class of 1906), Pierce retired in 1948. He was succeeded by Dr. Donald A. Martin who was superintendent until 1960 when he resigned to become superintendent of the Norfolk County Hospital, Braintree, also a tuberculosis treatment facility. Dr. Clark Streeter was Martin's successor. The hospital was closed in the early 1980s. The residential structures/office and maintenance structures, however, continue to be used by other Plymouth County departments as offices.

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The south-facing hospital group is sited in a knoll on a rise screened from nearby High Street. The hospital facilities consists of a two-story, hip-roofed **administrative/ward building** with an E-shaped footprint and a sizable three-story rear ell (see map, A; **form no. 104**). A curvilinear enclosed walkway extends from the right-side elevation to connect this group to a U-shaped addition, also hospital wards, sited at a slightly lower elevation (see map, B). The administrative building's facade consists of a three-story, three-bay wide center pavilion and one-bay corridors that connect to the three-bay wide by seven-bay deep forward-projecting wings. The center pavilion has a centered, broken pedimented entry porch and a full-width recessed porch on the third story. The ward addition massing is similar: one-bay wide by seven-bay deep forward projecting wings connected by a five-bay wide block. The front and side elevations on both massing groups are articulated with closely-set, large-scale windows to provide sufficient illumination and air to the interior spaces. A small, two-story, frame construction annex is located to the rear of the administrative section that was originally used for showering incoming patients and later as the **visiting nurses' office** (see map, C; **form no. 110**). Its massing and stylistic detailing resemble the hospital building but in a simplified form.

The staff residential and maintenance structures are located to the northwest of the hospital and administrative group, close to High Street. Their massing and stylistic detailing resembles the hospital group but on a smaller scale. The pair of structures closest to the hospital, both two-story, hip-roofed buildings are sited to produce a T-shaped footprint. The **Nurses' Residence (form no. 105)** building sited parallel to High Street is a symmetrically fenestrated, center-entry, five-bay wide by three-bay deep structure, used to house some of the hospital staff and as offices (see map, D). The **Nurses' Residence addition (form no. 106)**, constructed in 1939, is located to the rear of this structure (see map, E). This similarly massed but slightly larger building is sited perpendicularly to the forward structure and was housing for the nursing staff. Additional massing elements on both of these buildings are confined to the entry porches and gabled dormers on the rear building. The similar interior layout in both of these building consists of a center hallway that parallels the longer measurement of each building with small rooms on both sides of the passage. A third residential structure is set apart from this pair to the north, also fronting on High Street with a suburban set-back. This two-story, hip-roofed, five-bay wide by two-pile deep building was the hospital **superintendent's residence (form no. 107)**. The asymmetrical fenestration is more elaborately articulated to convey the higher stature of its residents. The **Bonney House (form no. 103)**, a one-and-one-half story Cape Cod house with multiple additional massing elements, is located between this residence and the staff housing (see map, G). Additional massing elements include large front gabled dormers, a shed dormer on the rear elevation and an elongated one-story gabled rear ell. The house, which dates to before 1830, was moved to its present location from a nearby site within the present Hospital Area before the hospital acquired it (see Area form C). The house became the head nurse's residence.

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The self-sufficiency of the hospital facility is evidenced by the maintenance buildings. The largest of these which parallels the nurses' housing, separated by a sizable paved and grass area is the **garage and grounds keeping building** (see map, H; **form no. 108**). This structure consists of a two-story, hip-roofed center pavilion flanked by elongated one-story wings variously articulated with garage bays and enclosed spaces. Nearby, to the east, is the one-story, hip-roofed, three-bay wide by seven-bay deep **paint shop** (see map, I; **form no. 109**). A county water tower is located to the northwest of the maintenance building (see map, J).

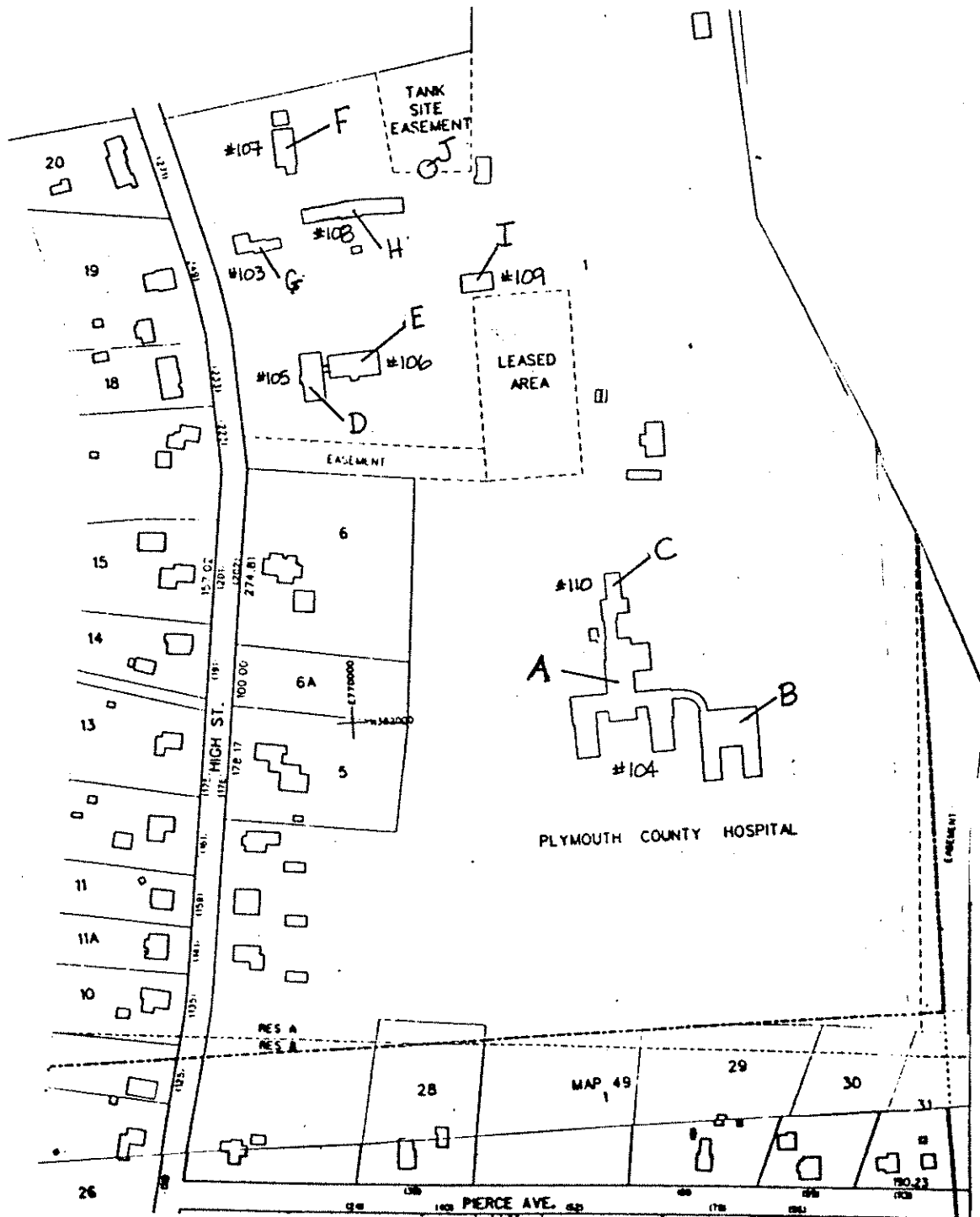
The use of the Italian Renaissance style was popular for at least a forty-year period beginning in the late nineteenth century in residential and institutional structures. Its use was especially appropriate for this tuberculosis hospital complex for two reasons. First, the massing and decorative detailing was well suited to residential and institutional uses both of which are present in this area. Second, the style is suggestive of the Mediterranean climate and the use of the out-of-doors, which was a major component of tuberculosis treatment at the time of the hospital's construction. Consistent with the Italian Renaissance style, decorative detailing includes the low-pitched hipped roof covered with red tile, stuccoed exterior walls, deep eaves supported by overscaled brackets, classically derived door surrounds and porch detailing, recessed porches, first-story windows with arched tops, and less elaborate second-story windows. The modern construction materials used for these buildings reflect the current ideas on tuberculosis treatment and contemporary ideas on hygiene, cleanliness, ; stucco-covered exterior hollow tile walls, tile roofs, interior gypsum partitions, and concrete floors covered with battleship linoleum.





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## National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form



Check all that apply:

☐ Individually eligible.

☐ Contributing to a potential district.

☐ Eligible only in a historic district.

☒ Potential historic district.

Criteria: ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Statement of Significance by **Dempsey/Driemeyer**.

The Bonney Hill area is significant as an important surviving cluster of historic buildings in the town of Hanson, in a settlement configuration distinctive to the town and probably the region. In this area, many of the town's primary house types can be found, with a particularly strong cluster of the earliest center chimney houses as well as the later 19th century end houses and other turn-of-the-century forms. The area also served as the location of the Plymouth County Hospital, designed for the care of area TB patients. The Bonney Hill area meets criteria A and C at the local level and retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.